



Region 7

Iowa  
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# Fact Sheet

July 2004

## Proposed Plan Available for Comment

### Chemical Commodities, Inc. Site, Olathe, Kansas

#### INTRODUCTION

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is releasing a Proposed Plan to address soil and groundwater contamination at the Chemical Commodities, Inc. Site in Olathe, Kansas. The action will be taken under the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act (CERCLA), also known as the Superfund law.

The preferred alternative:

- reduces the contaminant mass in site soil;
- prevents exposure to site soil;
- controls future land use;
- minimizes the spread of contaminated groundwater;
- reduces contaminant levels in groundwater;
- controls residential indoor air exposures; and
- prevents the use of contaminated groundwater as a drinking water source.

EPA is asking for public comments on its Proposed Plan. The comment period opens July 15, 2004, and ends August 16, 2004. A public meeting will be held at the Center of Grace, 520 South Harrison,

#### PUBLIC MEETING AND COMMENT PERIOD

EPA will hold a public meeting to provide information on the Proposed Plan for the Chemical Commodities, Inc. Site. The public meeting will be held:

**Tuesday, July 20, 2004**  
**7:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.**  
**Center of Grace**  
**520 South Harrison**  
**Olathe, Kansas**

**EPA will take comments on the Chemical Commodities, Inc. Site Proposed Plan through August 16, 2004.** Comments may be made at the public meeting, or sent to EPA at the address listed below:

Hattie Thomas  
Environmental Protection Agency  
Office of External Programs  
901 N. 5<sup>th</sup> Street  
Kansas City, Kansas 66101  
Fax: 913-551-7066  
thomas.hattie@epa.gov

Olathe, Kansas, on July 20, 2004 from 7:00p.m. until 9:00p.m.

Although EPA and the Kansas Department of Health and Environment

(KDHE) are recommending an action to address the contamination, a final decision will not be made until EPA reviews comments from the public. After the comment period closes, EPA will make a decision, which will be published in a Record of Decision (ROD). The ROD will also include a summary of EPA's responses to the comments received during the public comment period.

## **SITE DESCRIPTION**

The Chemical Commodities, Inc. (CCI) Site is located at 320 South Blake Street in Olathe, Johnson County, Kansas. The site consists of an approximately 1.5 acre parcel of land owned by CCI and adjoining property owned by the Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railway Company (BNSF) where CCI conducted its business operations and associated groundwater contamination which has migrated underneath the neighborhoods north and west of the site. All buildings and structures have been removed from the site as a result of early removal actions. The site is bordered on the east by BNSF rail lines, and on the north and west by a residential area. The property owned by CCI is currently zoned for medium sized industrial use. However, the city's long range plan shows the property owned by CCI as residential. Land use in the area around the site is predominantly residential with some mixed commercial and industrial use.

Chemical Commodities, Inc. was a chemical brokerage and recycling facility that operated at the site from 1951 until 1989. Used, off specification, and surplus chemical products were purchased and resold. Some chemical recycling and repackaging activities were also conducted on the CCI property. Chemicals of all types were stored on the property in a variety of containers including above ground tanks, under ground tanks, drums, barrels, cylinders, bottles, etc. Many of the containers leaked, causing a release of hazardous substances to the site soil and groundwater.

## **THE CONTAMINANTS**

Due to the wide variety of chemicals once stored on the CCI site, soil at the site contains numerous chemicals. The primary types of chemicals found in site soil include volatile organic compounds (VOCs), metals, pesticides, and polyaromatic hydrocarbons.

As a result of past operations at the site, the groundwater is contaminated with VOCs, primarily chlorinated solvents. The compound found most frequently and in the highest concentrations in groundwater is trichloroethylene (TCE).

## **SITE HISTORY AND ENFORCEMENT ACTIVITIES**

The EPA first became involved at the site in the early 1980s after receiving complaints from local and state agencies. Initially, EPA worked with the site owner, who performed some response actions, but was ultimately unable to conduct the work. In 1989, EPA approved the use of federal funds to conduct response actions at the site. The response actions conducted by EPA from 1989 to 1991 included testing of soil and groundwater, characterization and segregation of containerized waste, transportation and disposal of containerized waste, excavation and disposal or capping of contaminated soil, cleaning of the main warehouse building, and installation of a groundwater collection trench and treatment system to collect and treat the most highly contaminated groundwater.

The EPA listed the site on the National Priorities List (NPL) in June 1994. Throughout the mid to late 1990's, additional investigations were conducted on the CCI property, and EPA completed a thorough review of site records in order to identify potentially responsible parties (PRPs). PRPs are individuals or groups who have potential liability under the Superfund Law.

In May 2000, a consent order for the performance of a remedial investigation and feasibility study (RI/FS) was signed between EPA and two of the PRPs. Since earlier investigations focused only on the CCI property, the RI was focused on areas beyond the CCI property, and consisted of the installation of numerous groundwater monitoring wells and the collection of hundreds of groundwater samples. An initial RI report was approved by EPA in December 2001. However, additional investigation was necessary due to complex hydrogeologic conditions at the site. The final RI report was approved in February 2004. Results of the RI show that TCE contamination in the groundwater has spread underneath the neighborhood west of the site for a distance of about two blocks.

While the RI was in progress, EPA evaluated potential indoor air impacts associated with the groundwater problem. After several rounds of air sampling, EPA concluded that a response action was necessary, and the PRPs agreed to install ventilation systems in certain homes near the site.

Following completion of the RI, the PRPs completed a feasibility study (FS) which evaluates cleanup alternatives for both the soil and groundwater at the CCI site. The FS was approved by EPA in June 2004, and is available for review in the administrative record stored at the Olathe Public Library.

## **DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE**

Major components of the preferred alternatives include:

### Onsite Soil:

- excavation and offsite disposal of areas containing high concentrations of VOCs and metals;

- construction of a soil cap; and
- land use controls.

### Groundwater:

- treatment of onsite and offsite groundwater using chemical oxidation;
- monitored natural attenuation;
- groundwater monitoring;
- maintenance of home ventilation systems; and
- groundwater use restrictions.

## **FOR MORE INFORMATION**

The Proposed Plan and other site-related documents provide details of the nature and extent of contamination and the work that has been completed at the site. These documents are part of the Administrative Record File, available during regular business hours at the following locations:

Olathe Public Library  
201 East Park  
Olathe, Kansas

EPA Region 7  
Records Center  
901 N. 5<sup>th</sup> Street  
Kansas City, Kansas

If you have questions or need additional information, please contact:

Hattie Thomas  
Community Involvement Coordinator  
EPA Region 7  
Office of External Programs  
901 North 5<sup>th</sup> Street  
Kansas City, Kansas 66101  
913-551-7003, Toll-free 800-223-0425  
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